

THE CHURCHES

When Souls Bleed.
The International Sunday School Lesson for November 20, is "Jesus in Gethsemane." Matt. 26:36-55.

BY WILLIAM T. ELLIS.

NOT everybody goes to Europe or sees the ocean, or visits the metropolis, or hears the best music; but there are certain greater experiences which come to every life that is more than a mere existence. One of these mountain peaks of life is called Gethsemane. When the soul passes into the garden of loneliness and renunciation, and sweats the drops of blood that become rubies in the crown of character, it is Jesus in Gethsemane. The two highest points yet gained by any representative of the race are the rocky crag called Calvary, and the silent gray olive orchard known as Gethsemane.

Youth and ignorance plan only for pleasure; age and wisdom pray that they may suffer nobly, and serve by their suffering. The experience of spirit-anxiety as we study today in the case of Jesus in the garden, comes to all growing personalities. It is the death of the old self, the pain; the more keenly alive and sensitive to suffering an organism, the higher it stands in the scale of life. Capacity for sorrow is a measure of the inner man. Poets and philosophers give Jesus the first place among all who have borne our humanity, because he endured most, and in the kindest fashion.

The Difference in Men.

Two persons come through a massacre or an earthquake; both endure indescribable hardship and horror. One—usually the one who has acquired himself most nobly in crisis—is seated and shattered to the very core of his being; the other makes the louder outcry at first, but bears fewer scars. The reason is that persons differ in their ability to suffer. The poet feels the amputation of a finger more than the laborer feels the loss of an arm. We do not understand the tragedy of Gethsemane readers recall that it was Jesus, the most finely organized man that ever lived, who underwent this ordeal. He was human, but he suffered like a god. Everybody who meets pain should bear this principle in mind: The greater the suffering, the better fitted the character to endure it. Gross souls may howl like a dog under the pain when suffering overtakes them; those of nobler mold take their sorrow to the lonely recesses of their soul, and there from God learn the secret of resignation. Quite as suggestive as the anguish in the bloody sweat beneath the olive trees was the calm and comforting demeanor of the Master in the upper room, and his majestic serenity when the traitor, the soldiers and the temple police drew near. Before God his spirit bent low in anguish; among men he walked with fearless eye and words of comfort. That was the model gentleman of all time.

The Comfort of Out of Doors.

There is a deal of foolish gush and sentimentality spoken and written about the love for nature. The passion may be, though, a real and deep one, and strongest in the simplest characters. Jesus was an out of doors man. Some persons who rave over the beauties of nature are very fastidious about a little dirt and regular customers of the professional manicurist. Jesus, though, slept often on the ground, with only the soft Syrian silks for his covering. He plodded about many dusty miles, amid the dust and the intimate flowers. Since having had to do so myself, I know how he broke the tough native bread, covered with dust, and ate it with no sauce but hunger and water. He doubtless sought the warmth of the animals in the khan courts on cold nights, even as the soldier had on that first Christmas eve. The hills and the sea and the peace of the trees were very real to him; and in his hour of agony he went forth to a garden.

Play the person who must undergo his heart-crises in close rooms and amid the noisy companionship of uncomprehending fellows. The open air, the infinite reaches of the sky, and especially, the roaring tumult of the ocean in storm—these are the fitter surroundings for those great battles wherein man's destiny is determined. Many friends of out of doors, and nature will be a real comforter in the seasons of stress and storm. There is no loneliness in the vastness and silence of nature.

"Into the woods my Master went
Clean foreseen, clean foreseen;
Into the woods my Master came
Foreseen with love and shame."
"Out of the woods my Master went
And he was weeping."
"Out of the woods my Master came,
Content with death and shame."

The Loneliness of Pain.

"Every heart knoweth its own bitterness." At the same time most hearts are seeking to share that bitterness. The quest for sympathy, for comprehension and for comfort, is as universal as pain. The spirit beats its wings in vain against the iron bars of its own personality; each would be himself, yet disclose himself to another. This can never be. Nobody is ever fully understood. Man and wife may live together for a generation in congenial intimacy, and at the end remain each an undiscovered continent to the other. Friend may grope toward the soul of friend; but the two personalities never really merge. This is the mystery of individuality; the mark which God has put upon the human spirit as if to reserve it for himself and his own perfect sympathy.

With a human hunger for fellowship, Jesus took Peter, James and John into the Garden of Gethsemane with him. Alone, though, he had to go into the innermost recesses for his soul-struggle. The anguish of that hour no man might witness or understand. The deepest experiences of every heart are a mystery to those nearest and dearest.

We may not draw aside the veil from that holy night. How bitter was the cup the Savior had to drink is not for us to know—but all the draughts of anguish that have since been put to mortal lips have been sweetened by it. In his loneliness the whole world finds fellowship.

The message of Gethsemane is that the incarnate God has entered into fellowship with mortal pain. Jesus suffered alone, that he might share the sorrows of all who must bear the cross of pain. Whoever now enters the dark garden of every heart, finds the agonizing, soul-rent, bloody-

browed Redeemer there, sharing the comfort of the angels with his friends.

Why Be an Ingrate?
Tense Comments for November 20,
"How Does God Want to Be Thanked?" Ps. 109:1-5.

BY WILLIAM T. ELLIS.

It is impossible for us to maintain a balance with God. We can not make an equivalent return for his endless benefactions. All that he requires of us is a spirit of gratitude and of loving obedience. But that he does require.

God gives the grateful soul more reasons for gratitude.

Our pleasure pleases God. The Father is content to know that he has made his children happy.

Love to the giver is the best return for a gift.

To talk less of our troubles and more of God's goodness would drive many troubles away.

These are great days in which to be alive. The stir and ferment of society may trouble some, but to the person who wants to count in life these things spell opportunity. In this plastic age, the most difficult of our days, there is a rare chance for men of noble ideals and altruistic aims to impress themselves upon their time. If thoughtful persons, patriotic men, Christian men, seize this occasion and do not abandon it to the demagogue or to the man of ill-balanced views, this generation may accomplish wonders for the progress of human society. And surely this is a profound reason for thanking.

Gratitude seems the more gracious because of its rarity. Whoever ceaselessly "remembers his mercies" is a marked man by the hosts of heaven.

Just to be glad is praise.

World neighborliness is on the increase. The ties that bind nations together are steadily growing stronger. Distances are being annihilated more and more, and all of us are being drawn nearer and nearer, in understanding and sympathy, to the uttermost corners of the earth. This is a deep reason for thanksgiving. The oneness of the world ennobles man and glorifies God. That so many people are concerned for the whole world's welfare is a token of the increase of the Divine Spirit in human hearts, "for God so loved the world."

"Let the redeemed of the Lord say so!" The voice of such praise and testimony is heard as glad music in the courts of heaven. If we have been redeemed from sin, from daily difficulties, let us say so into the listening ear that waits for every note of gratitude.

The apostle's rule for a royal life is this: "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him."

The selfish and beggarly soul is never thankful. The professional mendicant is seldom sincerely grateful. A sense of gratitude distinguishes a large and generous heart. It takes a noble mind to appreciate mercy, and a noble heart to appreciate goodness. If our prayers are not winged by praise, then we may seriously question the depth and largeness of our nature.

We are not slaves driven to our work by the lash of a task master. We are the sons of God, laboring together with our Father in the heavenly world. Therefore, the joy that God has in his work, when he sees that it is very good, should be shared by us, his fellow workers.

"When you can not pray, then try praise," urged a wise Scotch preacher. The spirit that is laden, and that can not sing, is a burdened spirit. No matter what its mood, let over its mercies. The breath of praise kindles the fires on the altars of worship.

NEWS AND NOTES.

There are now eighty-two Y. M. C. A. secretaries from America working in thirty cities of thirteen foreign countries.

The president of a steel-rolling plant in northern Japan has offered to provide a home for a missionary and to equip him for the work of evangelizing the 6,000 employees.

Numerically Congregationalists now rank seventh in the list of religious denominations, with a total membership of 731,172.

The Russian secretary of the interior reports that in four years fifty thousand Russians have left the Ghetto and become Moslems.

The growth in membership of the Y. M. C. A. during the past decade has been nearly one hundred per cent.

A unique effort for the betterment of the Swiss people is known as the social office of Geneva, founded two years ago to give free legal advice to the poor. The head of the office is both pastor and lawyer. The work has grown so rapidly that two salaried assistants are now employed as well as twelve volunteer workers. Its support is guaranteed by the Swiss government, and it is proving of great help to pastors in advising them how to aid parishioners and others who are in legal difficulties. In 1909 nearly 20,000 cases were taken under advisement.

The Lady Chapel of the new cathedral in Liverpool, which is to be opened next summer, is to have a scheme of stained glass windows commemorating the good deeds of various women during different epochs. Besides the famous women of the Bible there will be, among others, these of more recent times:

Louise Stewart, and all the noble army of martyrs.
Grace Darling, and all courageous maidens.
Catherine Gladstone and all loyal hearted wives.
Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and all who have seen the infinite in things.
Elizabeth Fry and all pitiful women.

SEVEN SENTENCE SERMONS.

To have what we want is riches, but to be able to go without—that is power.—George MacDonald.

God never asks of us such busy labor as he asks of us for resting at his feet.—Anon.

The day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating concerns and

duties; help us to play the man; help us to perform them with laughter and kind faces; let cheerfulness abound with industry.—R. L. Stevenson.

God gives each man one life like a lamp, then gives that lamp due measure of oil.—Browning.

It is the narrow heart alone which does not grow; the wide one becomes larger with the lapse of years.—Jean Paul Richter.

Blest is he who can divine
Where right doth really lie;
And dares to take the side that seems
Wrong to man's blinded eye.
—Anon.

It is a grand thing to find joy in one's work; if you have found that you have found the heart of life.—James Buckham.

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.

Gems Gleaned From the Teachings of All Denominations.

Every successful man must have visions of high ideals.—Rev. Clarence A. Barbour, Baptist, Philadelphia.

A WINNER.
The man who resolves that if he fails he will yet "die game" is the least likely to fail.—Rev. J. E. Price, Methodist, New York City.

TROUBLES.
Far more troubles are suffered in imagination than in reality. Let us hope for the best instead of dreading the worst.—Rev. J. B. Remensnyder, Lutheran, New York.

STANDARD OF RIGHT.
It should be borne in mind that without some knowledge of the true nature of God, there is no standard of right.—Rev. Hiram Vrooman, Presbyterian, Providence, R. I.

WHAT IS NEEDED.
The greatest need today is not more men, but more man—not more women, but more woman. To be rich in deed and in truth is ultimately consciousness.—Rev. James Montgomery, Methodist, Denver.

GOOD IN LIFE.
There is more in life than any one of us has yet taken out of it. There is no place so bad, no person so despicable, but that some good may be found in them.—Rev. Alexander S. Taylor, Episcopalian, Chicago.

PREPARED FOR WHAT MAY COME.
The serious mind never forgets the hard side of things. It does not flinch in fear, for it is prepared for whatever may come, nor does it yield to any delirium of pleasure.—Rev. H. N. Brown, Unitarian, Boston.

LIVING UP TO GOD'S TEACHINGS.
We must live up to God's teachings at all times. It is not sufficient for us to walk beside Christ or with him toward him. We must walk in him all the days of our lives.—Rev. H. G. Furbay, Presbyterian, New York.

APPLYING GOD'S LAWS.
The laws of the state are applications of the law of God or of the law of nature, which is divine, and no human law is just that does not rest on these foundations.—Rev. J. L. Belford, Roman Catholic, Brooklyn.

GOD'S GARDEN.
The earth as the garden of God where man can grow healthy bodies and know something of the joy of living is a dream—yes, but a dream that is coming true.—Rev. Edward P. Sanderson, Church of the Pilgrims, Brooklyn.

CULTIVATING OUR HIGHER NATURE.
Every man has to some extent a menagerie in embryo in his nature, and his constant care should be to suppress and throttle the angry beasts of passion by the cultivation of the higher nature.—Rev. S. H. C. Burgin, Methodist, San Antonio, Tex.

ACHIEVING POWER.
There is a sharp, eager, passionate, achieving power in the world which belongs to our civilization, which stirs everything within us to the accomplishment of purpose and has no rest until it abides in the word "achievement."—Rev. Frank W. Gun-sauls, Congregationalist, Chicago.

MARRIAGE A SACRAMENT.
No matter what men's passions may dictate or society decide, the Christian must remember that marriage is a sacrament, instituted by Christ to confer grace upon the married couple that they may save their souls and bring up their children in the love and fear of God.—Bishop Conaty, Roman Catholic, Los Angeles, Cal.

SAVING A SOUL.
It may not be so spectacular to save a soul from eternal death as it is to rescue those who are hemmed in by roaring flames of the fire which is destroying the building in which they are, but the consequences of the former are infinitely greater in their

reach than the latter.—Rev. J. H. Kerr, Presbyterian, Brooklyn.

DEEPEST SATISFACTION.
Christ's words of comfort have been the world's deepest satisfaction. Many heads would have been pillowed in comfortless sleep, many hearts would have been shrouded in impenetrable darkness had not Jesus in calm assurance and quiet confidence, uttered his beautiful messages of hope and cheer and comfort.—Rev. M. L. Burton, Congregationalist, Brooklyn.

NO ABSOLUTE FREEDOM.
The aspiration to be free is noble, but absolute freedom is not for man. Not only is he limited by the tether of his own faculties, not only must he make terms with nature in order to win the blessing, but as a member of society he must conform to usage and convention if he would be other than a stranger and an outcast there.—Rev. C. E. Nash, Universalist, Los Angeles, California.

WHY GODLINESS PAYS.
Godliness pays in two worlds. It pays in dollars and cents, in pleasure and happiness. It is the surest and most certain road to prosperity. Not only can a righteous man succeed, but prosperity comes as a reward for right living. There are higher and better rewards than worldly success. The peace of conscience, the consciousness that we are prepared to die, the joy in the Holy Ghost, more exhilarating than any other pleasure, the conscious presence of God, which we may always have, are some of the rewards of righteousness in this life. Among other pleasures, how delightful the communion of saints! A prize fight will attract those who enjoy its brutality. A church attracts those who enjoy spiritual things and thus selects its very best people, whose company is most delightful.—Rev. W. A. Williams, Presbyterian, Philadelphia.

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